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By Decamps there is a lovely group of "Falconers" (12x16 inches) from the Duc de Morny's collection. By Zamacois, "The Antechamber," containing a group of bedizened domestics as you see them in the palaces of Roman cardinals; here, rusting in prolonged leisure, they betake themselves to the resources of the virtuoso; one flunkey, in his splendid livery, plays the viola, two others, facing him in other splendid liveries, listen to his execution and criticise with all the acumen of high art below stairs. Jules Dupré, the survivor of the Decamps and Troyon group, shows a small subject of a "French Village" (10x14 inches), with its receding profile and perspective of long low roofs, and its oak-tree burgeoning dark against the sky. Rousseau, the inimitable, is seen, surprisingly fine, in a little "Interior of the Woods," packed close with verdure and dense with vibrating shadows, as hushed and richly dim as one of Diaz's wood-scenes of the same motive.

By Delaroche there is a small, precious picture, the "Nymph of the Fountain," to be remembered by many New Yorkers as having formerly been in the collection of John Taylor Johnston. Like an ivory statuette, the water-goddess is gathered into the basin of a garden fount, where she lies in a posture of studied grace, her soft limbs caressing each other. The finish of this delicate example is excessively high, and its completeness of impression makes it as effective as a much larger picture; it is a wonder that Henriquel Dupont, or some other engraver, never fastened his burin upon a composition that would have a world-wide vogue if translated into the popularity of printer's ink and India paper.

Meissonier contributes two subjects. "The Antechamber" represents a youthful standard-bearer, his bright young face petrified by the influence of military tenue, guarding a palace doorway and wearing the mignon velvet cap of Henry III. His more elaborate picture, from the Taylor Johnston sale, is the well-known "Maréchal Saxe," representing the magnificent son of August the Strong on horseback amid a fine group of mounted officers, the crisp martinet uniforms and marble wigs of the period sculptured and chased like silver-work by Meissonier's sharp brush, and the whole natty group relieved against an effect of clear daylight sunshine, with a sky ruled across with white and gray ranks of cloud.

Knaus, the famous Berlin comedy-painter, is represented by "The Exhibition of the Baby" (24x18 inches). A mother lifts the infant from its cradle to be admired; there is all of the practised genre-painter's artifice in the contrast between the fair, young, laughing, girlish face in the background, and that of the sour old maid with black ringlets in front.

Madrazo is shown in his "Spanish Guitar-player," one of the purplish-gray moonlight-like effects he was fond of in the beginning of his career; the old fellow, in his footman's livery, thrums the guitar to amuse that leisure which is the unwelcome sign of the decay of some "ci-devant" wealthy house in which he is employed. In Spain, the families whose retainers once fought in the Indies are fain to let the retainer of to-day stick to a wall like a disused banner, and strike the catgut in a state of perpetual sinecure. By Boldini there are French peasants and a poodle dog in a garden scene, with one of his flashing effects of high noon. Simonetti is exhibited in a scene with a sedan-chair, a cavalier greeting the fair lady who sits within. Another Italian artist contributes a large view of Rome. Desgoffe has one of his smaller panels, a brilliant little painting of bric-à-brac objects. Jacque is seen with an excellent group of three or four sheep in a stable, where the brilliant burst of sunlight kindling in the gloom gives force and animation to the study. By Roybet there is a solid, well-modelled, thoroughly clever group of two pages making a pair of cocks fight; the well-managed red in the hose of the lad furthest back redeems Roybet in this case from the poverty of his usual leathery scheme of color.

Among American artists, besides Neal, there are to be noticed: F. E. Church, two small views, one of a tropical sunset, the other, a sunrise; Bierstadt, the "Yo Semite at Sunset" (5x3½ feet); Inness, a large view of Perugia; and Weir, the "Christmas Bell," representing spirits sounding the peal of Yule in a moonlit tower.

There has been much curiosity abroad to know the exact degree of importance to be attached to the picture market in California. Here is a specimen private gallery, enumerated literally, as the best way of giving the quality. It is one of half a dozen almost equally

fine. Let the artists and the experts set their most cunning baits and springs for this dazzling opportunity of the gold coast, instructed by this article that no inferior work will be successful there.

CICERONE.

BOSTON CORRESPONDENCE.

A NATIONAL ART EXHIBITION—SUMMER VAGARIES—RELUCTANT MODELS—THE DOINGS OF ARTISTS.

BOSTON, August 17, 1880.

AT last the Boston Museum of Fine Arts is to fulfil one of the highest objects of its existence in establishing a stated annual exhibition of contemporary American art, inviting the artists of the whole country to participate on equal terms. The exhibition is to come in the last of October, thus falling midway between the spring and the winter exhibitions at your National Academy of Design. It will come, too, at a time convenient for the display of the fresh work achieved by the artists in their summer campaigns. Everything in the arrangements seems to promise an institution conducted in a large spirit, purely for the interest of art, and calculated to attract the best efforts of the best painters. Thus managed it will not fail to become one of the leading and authoritative exhibitions of the country. The public here is undoubtedly as well instructed, discriminating and appreciative a one as any American community can supply, and with a comparatively large proportion of wealthy picture-buyers. The new modern schools of art, especially the French landscape schools, represented by Corot, Daubigny, and Millet, for instance, and the Munich school of figure and head painting have found the earliest, warmest, and most general appreciation in Boston. La Farge has obtained his highest prices, and hence had his two general clearing-out sales here. The potent influence of Hunt upon social as well as artistic circles was always exerted in behalf of the most advanced and enlightened taste in art. He cried up the broad, solid, and sincere in painting and connoisseurship, and was "death on" pale pedantry and pretension of all kinds, whether in layman or artist. New York painters need not fear to present the best they can offer to the Boston Exhibition.

The main picture galleries of the Museum are to be devoted to it this October. If the first one proves successful in eliciting a full representation of contemporary American art, it would not be surprising if its successor had a fine "annex" erected especially for it on the ample lot in the rear of the Museum building, so as to leave the permanent exhibition undisturbed. This has been seriously talked of by the Museum trustees, and it only needs a demonstration that the artists of the country will support a Boston annual exhibition to insure it.

Our artists are still out of town for the most part, spoiling their vacations by desultory work, which can amount to little beyond experimentation in many cases. In unaccustomed, and oftentimes uncongenial surroundings, out of the atmosphere of the studio, an artist is rarely able to be himself in his best vein. If he has established his style and school of subjects, he can paint them better in his studio than from nature. The truth, precious as it is, is not to be spoken at all times; neither is it to be painted when it does not stimulate the artist, but hampers and weights him down below his ideal. One great risk the painter in the country is exposed to—that of straying away from the field which experience has settled for him as his true ground. The marine painter is piqued into apple-trees and persuaded to young ladies in hammocks or under colored parasols. The portrait painter tries level fields and distant sea with surprising and irritating unsuccess, while the landscapist tortures himself with "genre" and interiors. To be sure there is the rest of change in these excursions out of bounds, but there is more in an unweary idleness and about as much profit and glory.

A friend of mine who paints a landscape that gets the highest prize in your National Academy exhibitions, wins plenty of popular admiration besides and sells readily, is changing (trying to change) from landscape to figures, in accordance with a definite purpose long ago formed and only deferred from year to year by the necessity of keeping something crackling under the pot. His greatest difficulty is that in his suburban home, where he paints best, he finds it next to impossible to persuade anybody to pose for him for the kind of subjects he desires to put into his pictures. Fine ladies

and children he experiences no trouble whatever in pressing into his service for a half-hour for models; nor are gentlemen lacking on occasion. This sort of people can appreciate his purpose, know what is wanted of them, and are only too ready to offer their assistance. But they do not supply the element he desires in his sturdy landscapes. He wants the sturdy picturesque toilers to match, the withered, or the rotund old man or old woman, the pathetically-awkward farm-hand or fisherman, the boorish boy or buxom maid. But these are precisely the types who won't be painted in this land of liberty and equality for love or money. His story of his struggle with his washerwoman is harrowing. She would rub and wring all day for his wife at ten cents an hour, but when he was paying her three times as much for bending at an imaginary washing-board, her back was "broke," "she couldn't do it, nohow," and wouldn't for ten dollars "nor no money." It was the same with his strapping house-servant: she would face a north-easter over miles of country road with the family marketing on her arm, but when it came to standing up in his studio with an empty basket in her hand, she was "kilt entirely" in ten minutes, and in half an hour threatened to get a new place.

Norton, the Boston marine painter, whose success has been one of the stimulating things for artists here of late years, has gone to school in Paris, after a brief career and fair success as artist in London. He has put himself through the regular discipline of the French apprentice in art, and has been drawing from the model in the ateliers. This is reversing the usual order, but it is a course that most home-bred American artists could follow with advantage. Norton, whose drawing was always fine, has improved, they say, more especially in color, which was here a little weak, monotonous and indecisive. He is this summer reported at work on the French coast, and some strong pictures are looked for from him as the result. W. Mark Fisher, who went into art from the same sign-painter's shop here as Norton, is a distinguished man in London and obtains great prices for his landscapes. Young Weeks, of Boston, is succeeding bravely in Paris as a painter of Oriental scenes, figures, and animals, attacking everything with great pluck, earnestness, and decision, and beating many of the Frenchmen in their own field of Algiers. Wight of Boston, in Paris, has made a new departure after years of hard labor at the boudoir and fashionable dressmaking and millinery "genre," and gone to dreamland and romance for his ladies and costumes. Lippincott, of Philadelphia, is coming from Paris to Boston to settle (having just engaged a studio here by cable), and Bridgeman, you will be glad to hear, has resolved to be an American artist and give his native land the benefit of his illustrious talents as stimulus and example. He will divide his time between Boston and New York after arriving in America this fall.

As to what the artists at home are doing or proposing to do, it is impossible to speak with definiteness at present writing. Most of them are still at the seashore or in the woods—and "the woods are full of them" as never before. It is about time to hear from the new crop of art-pupils turned out by our multiplied ateliers within the past five years. Many of them have made creditable "début," in a tentative way, at art club exhibitions during the past year or two. This season should show more clearly what real talent may exist in certain of the more promising ones on whom the public has its eye. Of the seasoned artists, J. Foxcroft Cole has been sailing and sketching off shore and on in the yacht of George S. Watson, the marine painter; J. Appleton Brown has been transferring the sweet beauty of the Merrimack region to canvas, and studying the wonderful lights on the summer sea at the Isles of Shoals from Mrs. Celia Thaxter's cottage garden; Tom Robinson has alighted suddenly on this continent from Africa again with a portfolio of sketches; C. R. Grant returns from Paris sooner than was expected; Mark Waterman is located here; J. M. Stone is to reopen his atelier for pupils in the "Munich School," and Gaugengigl and Selinger, exemplars of the same school, are also to have their pupils. Seavey, the flower painter, will have a host of lady pupils as usual, and T. H. Bartlett the sculptor, a full class of workers in plastic art. The Art Museum School, under the Messrs. Grundmann and Crowninshield, will reopen with standards raised even above the high prestige already attained by this nobly equipped institution.

GRETA,